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News Release

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River Ambassador Interns Learn the Ropes at Lowell National Historical Park in Summer 2004

Four Cambodian-American high school students, members of the River Ambassadors Program of the University of Massachusetts Lowell, are experiencing a challenging summer as interns in the Interpretation and Education Division of Lowell National Historical Park. They are learning the ropes of how the park gives tours, operates its exhibits, and interprets the unique industrial and environmental history of the Merrimack Watershed.

The interns are working with park rangers in the Interpretation and Education Division to plan and produce special boat tours and an environmental exhibit for the Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival, which takes place in August and draws an estimated 60,000 people to the banks of the Merrimack River. By doing this, the interns are helping open the door for the park to engage with this large community that has only rarely participated in park programming in past years.

During the eight-week program, the interns are learning communication and interpretive skills, and working side-by-side with rangers in park operations and programs. Park Rangers William Morton and Erica Foss have planned and coordinated the internship program and Water Festival activities of the River Ambassador interns. In addition, a career park ranger is assigned to mentor and help train each of the interns.

The interns are all incoming juniors or seniors at Lowell High School and include: Joan Chun, Sophall Tom, Jany Chourb, and Cara Choup. The park is hoping that after this exciting summer of immersion, one or more of the interns will be interested in working for the national park in the future and pointing toward career opportunities in the National Park Service.

This unprecedented program has been made possible by a \$4891 Civic Engagement grant from the National Park Service and \$5000 in grant funding (Institute of Museum and Library Services, and Jesse B. Cox Charitable Foundation) through the Greater Lowell Environmental Education Alliance and the Tsongas Industrial History Center of University of Massachusetts Lowell.